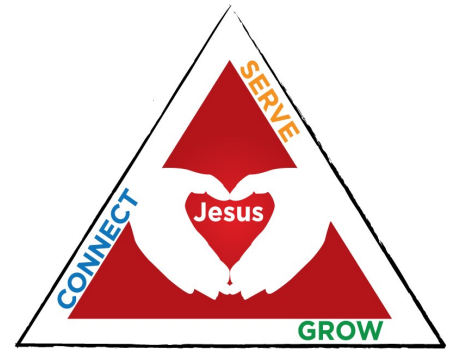




# From the Hill

Fort Hill United Methodist Church  
106 Oakridge Blvd.  
Lynchburg, VA 24502  
Phone (434) 847-1251  
Corner of Memorial and Oakridge Blvd.  
Website: www.forthillumc.com



Volume 61, No.7

July, 2026

## Fort Hill Planning A Vacation Bible School

July 20 - 24

6:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.



Vacation Bible School is just around the corner! Our Children and Youth Ministry team is excited to offer **Rainforest Falls VBS** for our church and community, **July 20-24 (M-F) from 5:30-8:15 p.m.** Snack supper will be served from 5:30-6:00 p.m. with the evening's activities beginning at 6:00 p.m. Kids will enjoy learning about who God is while rotating to Rooted Bible Adventures, Treetop Treats, Sticky Scripture, Imagination Station, and Wild Games, and more! Thanks to everyone who has already committed to serve in VBS, **but we need more volunteers!** A sign-up sheet is located in the Narthex, or you may call or email the church office. We look forward to a wonderful week of outreach in our neighborhood! Plan now to join the fun by volunteering!!

**Please share the registration information with your family and friends!**

Participants may register online at [www.forthillumc.com](http://www.forthillumc.com), or by emailing/calling the church office ([secretary@forthillumc.com](mailto:secretary@forthillumc.com); 434-847-1251). Registration forms are also available in the Narthex and Welcome Center.

### Special Offering for VBS to be Received

Throughout the month of July, a special offering will be collected to help offset the cost of VBS. If you wish to contribute, please clearly mark your gift for VBS and place it in the offering plate during worship, or in the designated containers in the front of the Sanctuary and in the Narthex. Thank you!

### Fort Hill Preparing Meal for Park View Community Mission Wednesday, July 29

Our Outreach Team will be preparing, packaging and serving the Parkview Café meal on **Wednesday, July 29**. In addition to cooking and packaging the meals, Parkview welcomes volunteers to stay and distribute the meals. We are also invited to eat and interact with the neighbors who stay and eat in the café. If you are able assist with dividing the meal into individual to-go boxes, please arrive in the Fellowship Hall by 2:30 p.m. OR if you are able to deliver the meals, and stay to help distribute them, please arrive by 4:00 p.m. Please contact Bonnie Kiger-Doney at 434-660-1163 to let her know how you can help or if you have any questions.

### July Communion Offering Designated for Lynchburg Daily Bread

For the months of July and August, our communion offering will be divided between Lynchburg Daily Bread and our own Local Relief Fund.

LDB serves people from all walks of life. Their guests include workers who are recently unemployed or those with temporary or part-time jobs who can't make ends meet. They serve the elderly and the disabled on fixed incomes, families with small children/babies, single parents, and persons with mental health challenges. Approximately 40% of their guests are over the age of 50. They are seeing an increase in the number of families coming to Daily Bread and are thankful to be part of making sure no child goes hungry.



The other half of the communion offering will go to our own Local Relief Fund to assist those who come to our doors seeking assistance with utility, rent, etc. Thank you for caring and sharing!



Photo Credit-<https://www.nbcnews.com/slideshow/news/flags-and-fireworks-america-celebrates-july-fourth-55580112>

On Saturday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, America will celebrate our 250<sup>th</sup> birthday! On this date in 1776, the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence. The signing of this document, and our victory in the Revolutionary War that followed, formally united the thirteen original colonies into a new and sovereign nation founded on the principles of liberty for all and self-government. This year, our annual celebration of this day has an even more profound meaning for us as we commemorate this milestone as a nation. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, all across our beloved country, from rural counties to the largest cities, from “sea to shining sea,” our nation’s flag will be flying, backyard grills will be sizzling, families and communities will be gathering, watermelons will be sliced, homemade ice cream churns will be humming, parades will be marching, and fireworks will be blazing as Americans celebrate all that we love about our country.

But I hope that somewhere in the midst of all the patriotic observances and family togetherness, that we will pause, as disciples of Jesus Christ, to humbly give thanks to God for the lively experiment in freedom and democracy that eventually became the United States of America, and recognize and appreciate all that we have been given, all that has been entrusted to us. I hope we will all take time to offer thanks to God for the freedoms we enjoy as American citizens, but too often take for granted. For believers, the most precious and treasured of these freedoms is our religious liberty, the freedom for ourselves and others to worship, to proclaim our faith, to own, study and teach God’s word...precious privileges that are unknown in many places around the world today. All across the globe, followers of Christ are being persecuted for their faith, churches are being padlocked or destroyed, and believers risk their lives to speak the name of Jesus or own a copy of the Bible. Our Christian sisters and brothers around the world face incredible hardship and suffering for claiming the name of our Lord. There are many restricted nations today where government-sanctioned aggression and anti-Christian laws lead to Christians being harassed, imprisoned, deprived of possessions or liberties, tortured and even killed because of their witness. Many around the world today pay a very high price to follow Jesus.

Whenever I consider these realities, I am overwhelmed with a sense of humble gratitude for the land in which I was born. Even with all our problems, struggles, differences, divisions and conflicts, I am thankful for the freedoms with which we have been blessed, and am prompted to pray more earnestly for Christians around the world who risk their lives daily to live out their faith in Christ. Can we ask our Lord, as disciples who are blessed with tremendous liberties, to enable us to live into our freedoms by appreciating them more? I pray that every time we enter our church for worship without fear or hindrance, we will give thanks to God for the privilege of gathering, and pray for those who cannot. I pray that every time we open God’s word in public or in private, we will give thanks to God for this holy privilege, and remember those around the world who do so at great personal risk. I pray that by God’s grace, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, God would empower us to live into the privilege we have to freely and boldly proclaim the name of Christ by enabling us to be more vibrant witnesses of the Good News of Jesus Christ. As Americans, we have been blessed with much, and as Christ reminds us, “to whom much is given, much will be required.” (Luke 12:48).

*-Grace and Peace, Pastor Nancy*

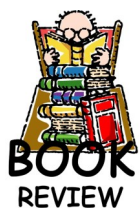
## **Easter Offering Has Big Impact**

This year’s annual Easter Special Offering was designated to go to the Free Clinic of Central Virginia, which suffered a catastrophic loss from a fire in December, 2024. Fort Hill has always been a leader in outreach to our community and it’s needs, so we are pleased to announce that, through your generosity, a total of \$2,414 has been given to the Free Clinic. These funds will go a long way in helping those who cannot afford health insurance or who have lost their coverage. Thank you for caring and sharing with our community.

# Bits and Pieces

## From Our Librarian . . . .

*Some Folks Feel the Rain...Others Just Get Wet*  
James W. Moore – Dimensions for Living, 1999



Did you know that certain individuals possess a keen awareness of their surroundings; they are attuned, sensitive, receptive, and responsive? They lead with their hearts, experience joy, and overcome suffering. Unfortunately, many individuals today do not celebrate; they merely cope. They do not find enjoyment; they simply endure. Life is a precious gift from God, not merely a test of endurance.

What accounts for the ability of some individuals to celebrate life with profound gratitude? In this book, Moore explores fifteen questions related to experiencing this gift, providing examples from Scripture, narratives from the lives of others, and practical advice for enhancing daily living.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Some space in the church library, and parts of the Fellowship Hall, will be used as workspace for VBS preparation throughout the month of July. The books in the library will still be accessible. Thank you for not moving or disturbing any of the VBS materials in these spaces. We appreciate your help!

## Ongoing Prayer Concerns

We are now listing our ongoing prayer concerns for those who are in nursing or rehab facilities or recovering at home. Only immediate prayer concerns will be listed in the weekly bulletin. Our current prayer concerns are as follows:

### Runk & Pratt (Gristmill)

Sylvia Morgan

### Guggenheimer

Bryan Garra

### Heritage Green

Jimmy Thompson

### Others who need our prayers:

Joyce Baker	Carolyn Maness
Betty Burford	Jimmy & JoAnn Mays
Carolyn Coleman	Becky Spangle
Richard Hawkins	Kendra Toney

## Do You Have Any of These Things?

This year's VBS incorporates a rainforest theme. If you have items that can help us create our theme (i.e. *plastic greenery*: artificial trees, garlands, palm-like leaves, tropical flowers; *rainforest stuffed animals*: monkeys, tropical birds, snakes, sloths, koala bears, etc.; bamboo items; lightweight tiki torches) please bring them **by Sunday, July 12, and leave them on the stage in Oxford Hall.** If you want your items returned to you after VBS, **please clearly label them with your name.** Please do not send fragile, breakable items or antique valuables. The VBS team cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items. Thanks so much for your help!

## VBS Volunteers Please Note!

**A mandatory meeting for all VBS volunteers is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8 at 6:30 p.m. in Oxford Hall.** If you are unable to attend this important meeting, please let Pastor Nancy know ([ncolemanjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:ncolemanjohnson@gmail.com); 434-401-

**Vacation Bible School Workdays:** Would you like to help us prepare for VBS by creating some simple props and decorations for our Rainforest theme? VBS workdays are scheduled in the **Fellowship Hall for Thursday, July 9 and Thursday, July 16, both at 1 p.m.** Come join in the fun as we get ready for VBS!

## About Our Children & Youth Sunday School Classes

Our Children and Youth Sunday School Classes will take a break for the summer months of June, July and August. We look forward to re-launching the program in the fall with a Rally Day to kick things off for a new school year! Many thanks to the following persons who have rotated the teaching for our Children and Youth Sunday School classes: Children's Class (K thru Grade 5): Jean Fielding, Roberta Litten, Stacey Lowe, Madison Wiley, Pastor Nancy; Youth Class (Grades 6 and Up): Bonnie Kiger-Doney, Mark Lowe, Scott Rob-

## About the Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study Group

The group will take a break for the summer, and will resume in September. So, watch for more information in the upcoming newsletters & bulletins. Their last gathering was Wednesday, June 10.

**We extend our sympathy to**  
Danna Whorton upon the death of  
her brother, Bob Fenley, of Texas on  
June 24.



# More Bits and Pieces

## Annual Conference Concludes

The 244<sup>th</sup> Session of the Virginia Annual Conference took place in Harrisonburg on the campus of James Madison University from June 17- June 20. In addition to Pastor Nancy serving as Fort Hill's clergy member, Bonnie Kiger-Doney served as our lay member, and Bob Doney, Ann Vincent and Dana Whorton served our Mountain View District as at-large lay members. Here are some highlights of the Conference:

**\*Upcoming Conference Office** retirements were recognized: Terri Biggins, Bishop's Executive Assistant with 20 years of service with the conference will retire in October 2026; and Nancy Blair, VUMPI Benefits Administrator, with 30 years of service with the conference will retire in February 2026.

**\*During the Memorial Service**, 66 clergy, lay members and clergy spouses that have died since last Annual Conference were remembered.

**\*During the Recognition of Retirees**, 35 clergy persons with a combined 695 years of service were honored.

**\*The Society of St. Andrew and the United Methodist Men** sponsored a Crop Drop during the AC session. 20,000 pounds of potatoes were bagged for distribution.

**\*\$70,000 has been collected** so far for this year's Annual Conference Offering which will be divided between the MJ Kim Fund to support the needs of immigrant clergy, and the Virginia Conference Center for Belonging and Advocacy.

**\*During the Juneteenth Celebration** on June 19, an offering of \$8,250 was collected for the Black College Fund to provide scholarships for students with financial need.

**\*Kits for Conference:** The following UMC Kits were collected for Annual Conference: 14,483 Hygiene Kits (valued at \$173,796.00); 1,332 Cleaning Buckets (valued at \$99,900); 1,163 Feminine Hygiene Kits (valued at \$27,912). Total estimated value of all kits collected: \$301,008.00.

For more summary information about Annual Conference 2026, visit <https://vaumc.org/ac2026-report/>

## THE BOX SCORE

*"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'" Psalm 122:1*

Average worship attendance in 2025 - 104

Average worship attendance as of June 21, 2026 - 101

NOTE: This attendance is for in-person & online worship beginning January 1, 2026

*"Bring the full tithes into the storehouse . . . And put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts: see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing." Malachi 3:10*

### BRIEF OPERATING FUND REPORT

*Your first line of giving — mission and ministry!*

**Budget for 2026** as approved by the Church Council is: \$404,827

**We need** an average of \$7,785.14 per week to meet this budget.

As of 25 weeks, our weekly receipts have averaged \$10,023.89

**Thank you for your support of the mission and ministry of your church!**

### *From the Hill*

is a publication of Fort Hill United Methodist Church, 106 Oakridge Boulevard, Lynchburg, VA 24502-1308  
Phone: 434-847-1251

### Times of Worship

9:15 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Staffed nursery provided from 10:15 a.m.- 11:45 a.m.

Rev. Nancy C. Johnson  
ncolemanjohnson@gmail.com

Diego A. Divila, Director of Music  
diego@forthillumc.com

Jeanette J. Seale, Administrative Assistant  
secretary@forthillumc.com

Rev. Sarah Calvert, District Superintendent  
Phone: 434-832-0401

The Rev. Sue Hauptert-Johnson, Bishop, Richmond, VA  
Phone: 1-800-768-6040

*"Fort Hill United Methodist Church seeks to nurture God's people so they can CONNECT, GROW and SERVE."*

*-Fort Hill UMC Vision Statement*






7/4 Janet Hawkins	7/12 Sophia Zelaya	7/18 Lorri Buchanan	7/25 Wade Jenks
7/7 Susan Akers	7/13 G. H. Jones	7/19 Avery Thompson	7/27 Joan Cocke
7/8 Bill Marsh	7/13 Madison Coghill	7/20 Jerry Conner	7/27 Ronnie Seale
7/8 Tammy Roark	7/14 Kaylin Moseley	7/23 Lucas Kendrick	7/27 Mary Siegle
7/9 Alex Drinkard	7/14 Tyler Drinkard	7/24 Bob Jenks	7/27 Deborah Glass
7/10 Sally Faidley	7/14 Riley Byrd	7/24 Derrick Quarles	7/29 Bob Doney
7/12 Ethan Green	7/16 Jennifer Moseley	7/25 Donnie Toney	7/29 Yvonne Moncebias
7/12 Andrew Marsh	7/18 Emily Jones	7/25 Michael Gibson	7/29 Noel Thompson, Jr.
			7/31 Rodger Beverly

*If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, it may be because we do not have the date in our data base. Please call the church office at 847-1251 with your information.*

## July Wedding Anniversaries

7/4 Richard & Rhonda Nunnally	34 years	7/18 Jamie & Robin Salyer	12 years
7/10 Donnie & Kendra Toney	33 years	7/29 Michael & Jeannette Twery	36 years

# July 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>In-Person Worship Each Sunday @ 10:30 a.m.</b> Java Stop 8:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Sunday School 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Staffed Nursery Available			1	2	3 Church Office closed	4 
5 Holy Communion	6	7	8 3:15 Endowment Committee 6:30 VBS Vol- unteer meeting	9 1:00 VBS workday	10	11
12	13 2:00 Council/ Finance Meeting	14 10:00 Outreach Team Meeting	15	16 1:00 VBS workday	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	<b>Vacation Bible School - 5:30 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.</b>					
26	27	28	29 11-4 FHUMC prepares meal for Park View	30	31	



**Fort Hill United Methodist Church**  
 106 Oakridge Blvd.  
 Lynchburg, VA 24502

**Address Service Requested**

Phone: 434-847-1251

www.forthillumc.com



**Rev. Nancy C. Johnson**  
 Pastor  
 ncolemanjohnson@gmail.com

**Diego A. Divila**  
 Director of Music

**Worship Times:**  
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School  
 10:30 a.m. Service in the Sanctuary  
 & online via YouTube

**Next newsletter deadline is  
 JULY 15. Please submit  
 SHORT articles by this date.  
 Thank you!**



**Lay Servant Ministry Training Offered August 22 in Lynchburg**  
 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at Chestnut Hill UMC

Have you ever thought about becoming a Lay Servant? If so here is your opportunity to learn more about this ministry and receive training at the same time. Here is what is being offered:



**Classes/Teachers/Texts:**

**Conflict Transformation** taught by DS Sarah Calvert

**Text:** *The Spirit and Art of Conflict Transformation: Creating a Culture of Just Peace*, by Thomas Porter

**A Beginner's Guide to Preaching** taught by Rev. Clyde DeLoach

**Text:** *From Pew to Pulpit*, by Clifton F. Guthrie

**Spiritual Growth** taught by Rev. Leigh Anne Taylor

**Text:** *Grow Spiritually Through Daily Discipline: Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition* by Steve Harper

For more information, contact Leigh Anne Taylor, [leighannetaylor@vaumc.org](mailto:leighannetaylor@vaumc.org)